

*Le Jélin* of Adanson.

To the Editors of the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*.

GENTLEMEN,—In the ‘*Annales des Sciences Naturelles : Zoologie*,’ 4<sup>me</sup> série, vol. xv. pp. 369–374 (1861), I published a note on the *Jélin* of Adanson and the genus *Pleurodictyon* of Goldfuss.

During my visit to Cette last summer, I had the opportunity, through the kindness of M. Dumel-Adanson, the present possessor of the collection of Adanson, of examining the typical specimen of *le Jélin* in the ‘*Histoire Naturelle du Sénégal*.’ I ascertained that it was not provided with any internal *calcareous* tubes, and that its structure was unlike that of any coral or shell or Bryozoon. It showed, on the contrary, in this latter respect a great resemblance to *Myriosteon Higginsii*, Gray, which I had the opportunity of examining in the British Museum through the kindness of Dr. Günther. Notwithstanding its very different shape, I suspect that this enigmatical body may prove to belong to some part of a cartilaginous fish.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

O. A. L. MÜRCH.

Copenhagen, April 2, 1871.

*On the Action of the so-called Poisonous Shadow of various Tropical Plants.* By PROFESSOR KARSTEN.

The author in the first place reported his experience of the properties of the Manchineel tree (*Hippomane manzanilla*, Linn.), which, like some other Euphorbiaceæ, Anacardiaceæ, and Artocarpeæ, is so much dreaded by the natives of the regions in which this plant is indigenous, that no one will approach it unnecessarily or stay any time in its vicinity; for it is generally known that the comfort of repose in the cool shade of this thick-foliaged evergreen tree is paid for with painful inflammations, and, in persons of irritable constitution, even with death. Nevertheless, at present, naturalists regard this dread as exaggerated, especially since Jacquin stated that during a storm of rain he remained naked for several hours under an *Hippomane* without the smallest injurious consequences. The author remembered this statement of Jacquin’s when he met with fine examples of the Manchineel on the coast of Venezuela, near La Guayra (on the sugar-plantation of Naignata), and did not hesitate to carry out his desire of collecting some of the milky juice of this tree in order to investigate its constituents. This occupation, however, which lasted for several hours, was speedily followed by a burning sensation over the whole body, associated with a swelling of the moister parts of the skin, particularly the face, and especially the eyes. On the next morning the eyes were almost completely closed up, and at the same time so irritable that Karsten had to stay for some days in a perfectly dark room. After the lapse of three days the swelling diminished, and the epidermis began to separate.